

Big Bend

Ranger Programs

National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Big Bend National Park
Rio Grande Wild & Scenic River



January 10 – 16, 2016

Sunday, January 10

7:30 PM Evening Program – “Rattlesnake Country” With their sharp fangs and venomous bite, rattlesnakes are often feared by humans. Join Ranger C. Rinas to test your knowledge of these reptiles and learn how to safely enjoy the outdoors now that you’re in rattlesnake country. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Wheelchair accessible. Bring a flashlight. 1 hour.

Monday, January 11

3:00 PM Guided Walk – “The Way We Walk” Many of us have enjoyed hiking on trails, but have you ever thought about how or why these trails were built? Join Ranger J. Woerner for a closer look at the work and thought behind trail building. Meet at the Chisos Basin Trailhead. Bring water, a hat, and good walking shoes. 1 mile. 45 minutes.

Tuesday, January 12

3:00 PM Program – “Scorpions” How is a scorpion like an alligator? What do they have in common with seals? Join Ranger K. Eckert to learn more about scorpions, common misconceptions, and the unusual similarities they have to other species. Meet on the patio outside the Chisos Mountains Lodge. Wheelchair accessible. 45 minutes.

Wednesday, January 13

3:00 PM Guided Walk – “Soap from Yucca & More!” If you have the knowledge, just about everything you need can be obtained from plants. Join Ranger C. Rinas on this easy 0.5 mile walk to learn about some of the traditional uses of plants. Bring water and sun protection. Meet at the Dugout Wells picnic area. 1/3 mile walk. 45 minutes.

Thursday, January 14

7:30 PM Evening Program – “Big Cats in Big Bend” Solitary and elusive, mountain lions have incited mystery, myth, and the imagination. Although often feared by people, these cats play an important role in the health of Big Bend’s ecology. Join Ranger J. Woerner to learn about these powerfully misunderstood creatures and what makes them so special. Meet at the Chisos Basin Amphitheater. Bring a flashlight. Wheelchair accessible. 1 hour.

Friday, January 15

9:00 PM Special NPS Centennial Evening Program – “Astrophotography Demonstration”

Sponsored by the Big Bend Conservancy, TJ Avery of Thomas J. Avery Photography will lead a mini-class in astrophotography. Learn some valuable tips for using personal cameras to capture the Milky Way. Meet at the parking lot at the beginning of the Basin Road.

Saturday, January 16

11:00 AM – 1:00 PM Special NPS Centennial Program – “Solar Viewing” Phil Keaton, former superintendent for the McDonald Observatory, will set up a hydrogen-alpha telescope to offer park visitors the opportunity to view the sun. This special program is sponsored by the Big Bend Conservancy. Meet at the Chisos Mountains Lodge Shade Ramada, adjacent to the Chisos Basin parking lot.

3:00 PM Guided Walk – “Life at the Windmill” The desert may seem to be an impossible place to live but a significant number of living things thrive in this extreme environment. Join Ranger B. Smith for an hour of discovery and exploration into the secret, and not so secret, stories of life at the windmill. Meet at Dugout Wells, six miles south of Panther Junction Visitor Center. Bring water and a hat. ¼ mile. 1 hour.

Not able to attend a program? Consider these alternatives:

The 22-mile-long Ross Maxwell Scenic Drive offers access to eight different trails, several scenic vistas, many paved pullouts with exhibits that highlight park geology and cultural history, and culminates at the Castolon Historic District. Take a day and go explore!

Enjoy the breath-taking beauty of Big Bend National Park in comfort with our 22-minute Park Orientation film. Available daily on request at the Panther Junction Visitor Center.

Explore beyond the park and learn more about Big Bend history. The Terlingua Ghost Town offers several restaurants and stores, as well as a self-guiding tour of the old quicksilver mining district and historic cemetery.